

ENEMY OF WHALES.

Strange Creatures Said to Exist in Alaskan Waters.

While operating a fishery on Admiralty island, Alaska, last summer, says a writer, my attention and the attention of my fishing crew was almost daily attracted to a large marine creature that would appear in the main channel of Seymour canal and our immediate vicinity. There are large numbers of whales of the species rorqual there, and the monster seemed to be their natural enemy. The whales generally travel in schools, and while at the surface to blow one would be singled out and attacked by the fish, and a battle was soon in order.

It is the nature of the rorqual to make three blows at intervals of from two to three minutes each, and then sound deep and stay beneath the surface for 30 or 40 minutes. As a whale would come to the surface, there would appear always at the whale's right side and just above where his head would connect with the body, a great, long tail or fin, "judged by five fishermen and a number of Indians after seeing about 15 times at various distances," to be about 24 feet long, 2½ feet wide at the end, and tapering down to the water, when it seemed to be about 18 inches in diameter, looking very much like the blade of the fan of an old-fashioned Dutch windmill.

The great club was used on the back of the unfortunate whale in such a manner that it was a wonder to me that every whale attacked was not instantly killed. Its operator seemed to have perfect control of its movements, and would bend it back till the end would touch the water forming a horseshoe loop, then with a sweep it would be straightened and brought over and down on the back of the whale with a whack that could be heard for several miles. If the whale was fortunate enough to submerge his body before the blows came, the spray would fly to a distance of 100 feet from the effect of the strike, making a report as loud as a yacht's signal gun.

What seemed most remarkable to me was that no matter which way the attacked whale went, or how fast (the usual speed is about 14 knots) that great club would follow right along by its side and deliver these tremendous blows at intervals of about four or five seconds. It would always get in from three to five blows at each of the three times the whale would come to the surface to blow. The whale would generally rid itself of the enemy when it took its deep sound, especially if the water was 40 fathoms or more deep. During the day the attack was always off shore, but at night the whales would be attacked in the bay and within 400 yards of the fishery.

"I do not know of any whales being killed, but there were several that had great holes and sores on their backs. Questioning the Indians about it, I was told that

there was only one, that it had been there for many years, and that it once attacked an Indian canoe and with one stroke of the great club smashed the canoe into splinters, killing and drowning several of its occupants.

Bridal Shirts.

The Scandinavian bridegroom presents to his betrothed a prayer-book and many other gifts. She in turn gives him, especially in Sweden, a shirt, and this he invariably wears on his wedding day. Afterwards he puts it away and in no circumstances would he wear it again while alive. But he wears it in his grave, and there are Swedes who earnestly believe not only in the resurrection of the body, but in the veritable resurrection of the betrothal shirts of such husbands as have never broken their marriage vows. The Swedish widower must destroy on the eve of his second marriage the bridal shirt which his first wife gave him.

An Ounce of Seed.

An ounce of onion seed was sown in the garden of Miss Carwithen, at Springfield, Newton Abbot, last March. Recently the gardener gathered 460 pounds of onions.

Sometimes.

Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between contentment and laziness.

A LACK OF EYEGLASSES.

Returning Traveler Complains of What He Found in British Isles.

The clergyman took off his eyeglasses and carefully wiped them with his silk handkerchief, says the New York Tribune.

"The next time I spend the summer in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland," he remarked, with vindictiveness in his tones, "I shall carry with me several extra pairs of my particular lenses. Maybe you don't understand what it means to break your glasses in the territory of Edward VII?"

The listener, not being afflicted with eyeglasses, shook his head. The clergyman continued:

"I have been abroad about ten times, and seven of those ten trips were aimed at the British Isles. I have been through Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales, and I have never seen offered for sale in country, hamlet or city store a pair of light weight silver or gold rimmed spectacles, and as for the rimless variety, such as these are, I don't believe the English opticians know what they are, judging from the way in which they stare when an American takes in a pair for fixing.

"The only kind of spectacles worn in the British Isles, as far as my observation goes, is the iron or steel variety, such as our grandfathers and mothers used to hang upon their noses when they perused the Philadelphia and Boston news letters. I repeat that the light weight gold and silver

rimmed spectacles are almost unknown in England. You can get them made for you, but you cannot buy them over the counters.

"You ask why? Well, I cannot tell you that any more than I can explain to you why the English insist on riding in the old-fashioned apartment carriages on the railroads. I have my own private opinion on the subject, however, and it is this—the cause is to be found in the thriftiness of the people. We are more careless, and a broken pair of spectacles is so ordinary an incident of everyday life here that the man who is forced to wear them generally keeps himself supplied with two or three pairs for emergency's sake. In England the breaking of a pair of spectacles is viewed in the light of a calamity. It is no land for the oculist. The steel rimmed glasses have seen to that. Why, you can take a pair of those heavy weight spectacles and dash them around regardless of any danger of a collapse. That is the reason, experience has taught me, for the lack of the light American variety of glasses. It may be satisfactory for the English, but it is annoying for the American tourist, as I have found to my sorrow. Once in Birmingham I had to wait over three trains to get my rimless glasses repaired, and I had an important engagement in London that day. You ask some other man who's been much in England, with spectacles attached, and see if he does not tell you the same story."



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BROOK FARM AMENITIES.

Some of the Humors of the Colony of Notables.

Mr. Lindsay Swift, whose work on Brook Farm is really one of the most thorough monographs ever written in the country, reports a legend that one of the younger members or pupils confessed his passion while helping his sweetheart to wash dishes; and Emerson is the authority for stating that as the men danced in the evening, clothespins sometimes dropped from their pockets. Hawthorne wrote to his sister, not without sarcasm: "The whole fraternity eat together and such a delectable way of life has never been seen on earth since the days of the early Christians. We get up at half-past six, dine at half-past twelve and go to bed at nine." An element of moral protest also entered into the actual work of the more serious members, writes Thomas Wentworth Higginson, in Atlantic. Thus Mr. Ripley said to Theodore Parker, of John Dwight, afterwards eminent as a musical critic: "There is your accomplished friend; he would hoe corn all Sunday if I would let him, but all Massachusetts could not make him do it on Monday." Rumor adds that Parker replied: "It is good to know that he wants to hoe corn any day of the week." The question is not how far these details were based on fact or were the fruit of fancy, but the immediate point is that they materially aided in keeping up the spirits of the unbelieving world outside.